



Disproportionate Minority Confinement Lexington Fayette County

DMC Committee Report December 31, 2008

Partners For Youth, Lead Agency

**Partners For Youth (PFY) is a community coalition
that works to improve the lives of economically disadvantaged youth.**

**PFY's mission is to promote positive youth development
and to prevent juvenile delinquency
through collaboration and capacity building.**

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History

*Injustice anywhere
is a threat to justice everywhere
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

According to the Kentucky Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee's (JJAC) May 2002 Technical Report, Disproportionate Minority Confinement in Kentucky, An Analysis of the Process and Decision-Making Points In The Juvenile Justice System, African-Americans age 10-17 in Fayette County were being detained in pre-trial detention at approximately three times their rate in the population. As the Department of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Council, Partners For Youth conducts a bi-annual community needs assessment which identifies issues related to juvenile delinquency and prevention efforts. In addition to the previously mentioned JJAB report, the data collected in 2003 by PFY for the next needs assessment indicated an over-representation of African American youth in Fayette County Juvenile Detention.

With guidance from the JJAB, PFY initiated Fayette County's Disproportionate Minority Confinement Committee in the summer of 2003. PFY brought together a group of community stakeholders to partner in addressing Fayette County's over-representation of minorities, especially African Americans, in juvenile detention. Stakeholders present at the meeting agreed that all sectors of society should work together to build a strong community that cares about all its youth. The newly formed DMC Committee established an initiative to decrease racial disparity in Fayette County's juvenile detention numbers by focusing on the unique needs of these youth and the need to protect the safety of the community. The committee purpose is to assure that juveniles are being appropriately detained.

To this end, the DMC committee developed the following goals:

- Examine policy, procedures, laws, and practices at each decision point in the Juvenile Justice process for potential for bias contributing to the disparate representation and treatment of youth of color in the juvenile justice system;
- Increase opportunities for youth that contribute to positive youth development, increase decision making skills in youth, and increase positive civic engagement by the non-traditional youth participant; and
- Advocate for system, community, and institutional change, which decreases racial disparity at each decision point leading to disproportionate minority confinement.

A non-traditional youth participant is a youth of color at risk for coming in contact with the juvenile justice system based on family and community risk factors

A significant body of research reveals that racial disparity in the initial contact with the juvenile justice system translates to a disproportionate number of juveniles detained, adjudicated and placed in out of home care, including secure confinement. Therefore, the initial focus of the initiative was to examine policy and practice leading to the granting of an extension of detention.

An extension of detention is an order by a judge allowing a juvenile to be held in detention up to 24 hours for a status offense and 48 hours for a public offense, pending a detention hearing.

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Throughout the four years of the local DMC efforts, the committee has brought together a broad representation of juvenile justice system stakeholders, community agency representatives, and concerned citizens.

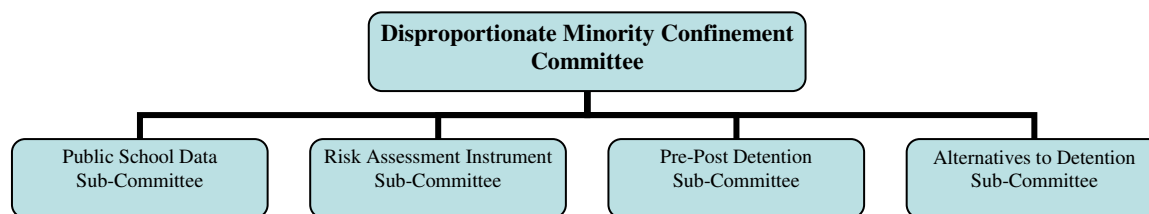
In the first year (2004), the DMC Committee accomplished the beginning stages of mapping the path youth travel through the juvenile justice system from initial contact through disposition.

In the second year of the initiative (2005), technical assistance was provided by Dr. Kimberly Kemp-Leonard, Professor of Sociology, Crime and Justice Studies, and Political Economy School of Social Sciences, University of Texas at Dallas, and funded by the United States, Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Additional technical assistance was provided in the third year (2006) by W. Haywood Burns Institute (BI), funded by the Kentucky, Department of Juvenile Justice, Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, and the Sub-Committee on Equity and Justice for All Youth (SEJAY).

In response to recommendations and suggestions resulting from the technical assistance, in the third and fourth years (2006-2007), the DMC committee developed sub-committees to address:

- Potential for bias in the issuing of Disorderly Conduct charges levied on high school students in Fayette County Public Schools that led to custody holds and consequent referrals to the Court Designated Workers (CDW);
- Collecting of pre- and post-detention demographic data on a periodic basis to guide DMC Committee decision making and outcomes measurement;
- Development of a local Risk Assessment Inventory that can be used by CDW to complement the AOC- JW-39 (detention criteria instrument) by providing additional specific information to the judge making the decision to grant an extension of detention; and
- The need for alternatives to detention, especially mental health options, available to judges.

CDWs are those delegated by the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts for the purpose of placing children in alternative placement prior to arraignment, conducting preliminary investigation, and formulating, entering into, and supervising diversion agreement, and performing such other duties as authorized by law or court order.



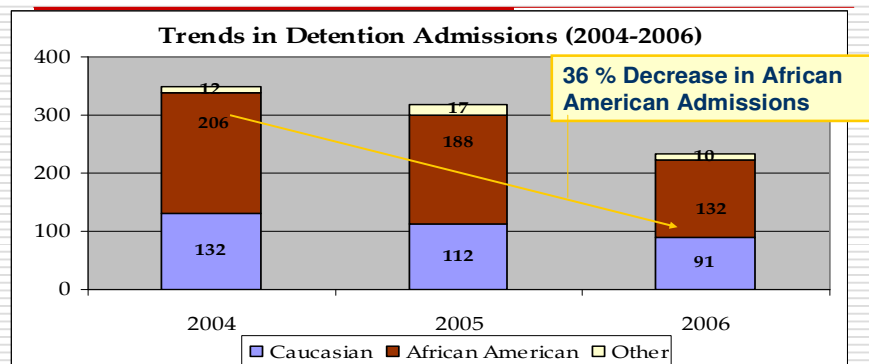
The Committee reports the following action as direct or indirect outcomes of discussions and efforts around the disparate representation of youth in detention in Fayette County:

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- Initial changes in juvenile justice system policy and practices, including changes in the General Order 2000-4;
- Development by PFY of youth led civic engagement activities to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors using the positive youth development philosophy outlined by America's Promise and the Search Institute;
- Development by PFY of a Truancy Assessment Center;
- Revision of MASH's eligibility criteria facilitating the acceptance of youth charged with Assault IV on a case-by-case basis. Also an increase in the number of referrals to MASH from the courts by 342% in FY 2008 over FY 2007;
- Decision by Family Court judges to no longer pre-authorize detention on runaway cases; and
- Participation of several DMC Committee members in the Race, Community and Child Welfare Collaboration's Undoing Racism Training;

General Order 2000-4 was a court order issued by Fayette District Judges which expanded the detention criteria beyond the Kentucky AOC JW-39

Detention Admission Trends (2004-2006)



As a result of Disproportionate Minority Confinement conversations on the local level, the local Division of Youth Services increased daytime programming for court-involved juveniles not attending classes. This program is also open for students on suspension.

Based on data they analyzed, the W. Haywood Burns Institute reported in 2006 that “over the last three years Fayette County has experience a rather significant decrease in detention admissions of youth of color.” From 2004-2006, there was a 33% decrease in the overall number of youth in detention and a 36% decrease in African American youth in detention.

The Next Step

The work of addressing Fayette County's disparate representation of minority youth in detention is complicated. And the Disproportionate Minority Confinement Committee does not assume full credit for the decrease in disparity from 2004-2006. The committee work assures that juveniles are being appropriately detained, and that the potential for bias in the juvenile justice system is addressed. It is important that our community sustain system policy changes made as a result of local and statewide efforts to address DMC, as well as identify additional changes at each contact point for young people in the juvenile justice system with potential to impact disparity. Successfully addressing DMC includes garnering community-wide support for changes as supported by the analysis of data on a periodic basis.

It is also important that the DMC Committee further explore non-system contribution to the disparate representation of minority youth in detention. This includes promoting community level change that values youth, and establishes character-building environment whereby youth from all economic, racial, and cultural backgrounds can reach their highest potential.

In 2009, the Disproportionate Minority Confinement Committee plans to:

- Recruit more community-level partners, who will bring detailed information about the community to the planning processes of the DMC Committee. These will be non-traditional stakeholders, such as parents, youth and /or their representatives most impacted by DMC, as well as community based organizations, neighborhood organizations, and faith based institutions;
- Conduct data analysis with community and system stakeholders to
 - assure that juveniles are being appropriately detained,
 - examine what contact point and system changes have the most potential for reducing bias; and,
- Identify effective steps on the community and system level to prevent re-offending, especially for court-involved youth of color.
- Identify and recruit DMC champions such as local and/or state elected officials to advocate for and promote community-wide and systematic changes that reduce DMC in Fayette County;
- Reduce the number of Status Offenders being detained in Fayette County;
- Develop and expand the use of Alternatives to Detention, such as shelters, foster care, and electronic monitoring;
- Educate the partners, agencies, and community on the negative impact of the use of detention;
- Collaborate with all law enforcement entities (ie local Division of Police, University of Kentucky and Transylvania University, and Fayette County Public School law enforcement) to aggregate and report local arrest and release data by race and charge; and
- Collaborate with the Race, Community & Child Welfare initiative by promoting Undoing Racism workshops in Fayette County's, and promote the use of DVD series such as Race, Power of an Illusion and Unnatural Causes to stimulate dialogue and to better understand racial bias and its effect on youth.

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Adjudicate - To settle a case by judicial procedure.

Adjudication Hearing – A hearing to determine the truth or falsity of the allegation(s) or charge(s) placed against the juvenile.

ATD – Alternatives to Secure Detention

CARY – Community Alternatives and Resource for Youth

CDW – Court Designated Worker - that organization or individual delegated by the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts for the purpose of placing children in alternative placement prior to arraignment, conducting preliminary investigation, and formulating, entering into, and supervising diversion agreement, and performing such other duties as authorized by law or court order.

Child Taken Into Custody / Arrest - Action of taking a youth into police custody for the purpose of charging him or her with a delinquent act. The juvenile justice process often begins with an investigation by a police officer, either because he or she observes a delinquent act being committed or because such an act is reported. The police officer will generally take one of two actions when the child is taken into custody: (1) field release the youth to his or her parents or guardian' or (2) keep the youth in custody and refer the matter to the court designated worker for further processing

DAC – Detention Alternative Coordinator, Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice

DCBS – Department of Community Based Services, Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Detention – Juvenile detention, as part of the juvenile justice continuum, is a process that includes the temporary and safe custody of juvenile whose alleged conduct is subject to court jurisdiction who require a restricted environment for the community's protection. For the sake of this report, detention refers to confinement in a secure facility pending pretrial release, juvenile court proceedings, or disposition. Detention is also referred to as the facility for the confinement of individuals accused or convicted of criminal or delinquent activity.

Detention Hearing – A hearing held by the judge for the purpose of establishing probable cause and for the purpose of determining whether a juvenile shall be further detained.

Disposition Hearing – A hearing to determine the action to be taken by the court on behalf of, and in the best interest of, the child.

Disproportionate Minority Confinement (DMC) – The disparate representation of youth of color in secure detention, when compared to the rate that this group is represented in the general

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population. Note: In 2002 the Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act expanded the scope of DMC from “disproportionate minority confinement” to “disproportionate minority contact.” Fayette County’s DMC initiative, however, currently remains focused on confinement and all reference to DMC is a reference to confinement.

DJJ – Kentucky, Department of Juvenile Justice

DPA – Department of Public Advocacy

DYS – Lexington Fayette Urban County Government, Division of Youth Services

Extension of Detention – Order by a judge allowing a juvenile to be held in detention up to 24 hours for a status offense, and 48 hours for a public offense, pending a detention hearing

FCPS – Fayette County Public Schools

General Order – A court order issued by Fayette District Judges which expanded the detention criteria beyond the Kentucky AOC JW-39

HBI - W. Haywood Burns Institute

Juvenile - A person who has not reached his or her eighteenth birthday, and falls under the jurisdiction of the family or juvenile court.

JW-39 – Pre-Adjudication Detention Criteria Instrument required by the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts for all juveniles being presented to a judge by CDW’s for consideration to grant an extension of detention.

KRS – Kentucky Revised Statute

LFUCG – Lexington Fayette Urban County Government

MASH – MASH Service of the Bluegrass operates a ten-bed emergency shelter for youth in Fayette County

OJJDP – United States, Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Non-Traditional Youth – Youth of color at risk for coming in contact with the juvenile justice system based on family and community risk factors.

NYC – Neighborhood Youth Council

Probation - Placing a youth found to have committed an offense under the supervision of the court. During probation, the young person must maintain good behavior, not commit another offense, and meet any other conditions the court may deem appropriate to impose.

Relative Rate Index – System used nationally to compute the **rate** (volume) at which members of racial groups, i.e. Caucasians, African Americans, and Hispanics, come in contact with the juvenile justice system at various contact points (arrest, pre-trial detention, hearing, adjudication, etc.) RRI provides a single index number that indicates the extent to which the volume of that contact point or activity differs for minority youth and white youth (minority race/white race), and compares those rates across decision points for the purpose of analyzing and reducing Disproportionate Minority Confinement (Contact). This model allows for local selection of **relative** decision points that reflects the major flow and major points data is available in each jurisdiction.

SEJAY – Kentucky Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, Sub-Committee on Equity and Justice for All Youth

Status Offender – A child who is a habitual truant, habitual runaway, or is deemed as being beyond the control of his or her parent or school. These acts, if committed by an adult, would not be a violation of the law.

Supervision - DYS or DCBS monitoring of a status offender's compliance to court ordered terms from a Family Court

2008 DMC Report D E T A I L S

DMC Committee Composition

Sgt. Christopher Townsend, Committee Chairperson
Jane Gibbs, Co-chairperson
Larry L. Johnson, Coordinator
Terry Stivers, Secretary
William Kendrick, Former Chairperson
Andrea Coleman, Former Coordinator

Initial Community / Juvenile Justice System Representatives	
Partners For Youth	Fayette County Juvenile Detention Center
Concerned Citizens	Law Enforcement Fayette County Public Schools
County Attorney's Office	Fayette District Judge
Court Designated Workers Office Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts	Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts
Division of Youth Services Lexington Fayette Urban County Government	Kentucky Department of Community Based Services
Division of Police Lexington Fayette Urban County Government	Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice Community Office
Ed Necco and Associates Inc	United Way of the Bluegrass
Fayette County Public Schools	

Added Representatives	
Concerned Citizens	Family Court Judges
CHASE Bank	Fayette County Legal Aid
Children's Law Center	Fayette County Sheriff Department
Department of Public Advocacy	Multicultural Affairs Office University of Kentucky
Detention Center Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice	MASH Services of the Bluegrass

Sub-Committees

Risk Assessment / Alternatives to Detention	
Judge Maria Ransdell, Chairperson Fayette District Court	Stephanie Hong Partners For Youth
Rebecca Diloreto, Department of Public Advocacy/Children's Law Center	Karma Potter Wilson, Court Designated Workers Office
Jane Gibbs, KY Dept of Community Based Services	Terry Stivers Partners For Youth
Rebecca Graff MASH Service of the Bluegrass	Chris Townsend, Division of Police
Mary Hester Department of Corrections LFUCG	Jae Underwood, Division of Youth Services Probation Office

School Data	
Jim Searle, Chairperson, Law Enforcement Fayette County Public Schools	Stephanie Hong Partners For Youth
Zephrenia Campbell, Community Action Council	Chris Townsend, Division of Police
Rebecca Diloreto, Department of Public Advocacy/Children's Law Center	Jae Underwood, Division of Youth Services Probation Office

Pre-Post Detention Data	
Karma Potter Wilson, Chairperson, Court Designated Workers Office Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts	Valerie Smith Concerned Citizen
Rebecca Diloreto, Department of Public Advocacy/Children's Law Center	Terry Stivers Partners For Youth
Anthony Jackson, Community Office Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice	Randy Thomas Ed Necco and Associates
Stephanie Hong Partners For Youth	Chris Townsend, Division of Police
Pauline Shackelford Regional Court Designated Workers Office Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts	Jae Underwood, Division of Youth Services Probation Office

Data Sources

In the onset of its work in 2004, the DMC committee collected the following data to gain a better understanding of contributions to Disproportionate Minority Confinement in Fayette County.

This data included:

- Aggregate data for crimes that are traditionally committed by young people, such as residential burglary, assaults, damaged property, auto theft, and theft by unlawful taking;
- A list of all licensed alcohol dispensers, both by container and by the drink, including night-clubs, bars, restaurants, sporting facilities, liquor stores, service stations, and grocers; Field release and detention numbers from the Kentucky Administration Office of the Courts, Court Designated Workers Office, which uses the Kentucky Administration Office of the Courts, COURTNET data system; and
- Criminal and/or delinquent incidents report for middle and high schools in Fayette County.

This data was charted as best could be determined by Zip Code. The information was used to target unique geographic areas of Fayette County based on risk factors.

The Committee also reviewed LexLinc report “Our Community: An in-depth look at the characteristics and human service needs of Lexington”. This report provided neighborhood sector demographic information; including economic status, perceived well-being, perceived neighborhood crime and safety, and household characteristics.

In 2007, the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice, on behalf of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board and all of its subcommittees, contracted with Eastern Kentucky University to build upon the 2000-2004 Juvenile Crime Analysis. In 2007, ECU analyzed the 2006 data for the Juvenile Crime Analysis. This data was reviewed by the local DMC Committee’s, Data Committee in the Fall of 2007.

In the Spring of 2008 the Pre/post Data Sub-Committee requested and received from DJJ aggregated status and public offense data on youth in detention during calendar years 2006 and 2007. This data included a unique identifier for each youth, race, gender, age, detention charges and underlying charges, Pre-Post Adjudication data, date entering and exiting detention facility, and days in ATD.

Changes Impacting DMC

*There is no social-change fairy.
There is only change made by the hands of individuals.
Winona LaDuke*

Several system and community changes have taken place in the past few years that are expected to impact DMC numbers in Fayette County.

- **2004** - The establishment of a local Detention Alternative Coordinator (DAC Program) in Fayette County. This program also provides monitoring devices for court ordered youth.
- **2004** – Inception of Family Court: The Family Court system uses a “One Family, One Judge, One Court approach. Cases are presented in a single court, allowing the same judge to hear all matters involving a particular family.” In addition, Family Court in Fayette County hears all status offender cases.
- **2005** – Opening of new juvenile detention center in Fayette County run by the DJJ, and the closing of local juvenile detention center.
- **2007** - Legal Aide - Department of Public Advocacy - Children’s Law Center: Due to a funding crisis children and their parents who are in the juvenile justice or criminal justice system receive less representation than is needed. However, DPA joined the local DMC effort in 2007. The staff person who joined previously served on the state JJAB and was a founding member of SEJAY. Thus, she was able to bring to the table a national, state-wide and local perspective and help us access resources and gain a larger perspective on data collection and strategies to create alternatives to detention. The Children's Law Center, Inc. has now joined our local DMC efforts contiguous with the opening of a Lexington office for this state-wide children's advocacy non-profit law firm. With its state-wide and national contacts, CLC will bring valuable resources to the table to help address DMC in Fayette County
- **2007** - Division of Youth Services, Probation Office implemented an out of school suspension reporting center. In Fayette County, like many other counties across the country, school attendance and behavior continues to be a huge concern, bringing youth into the court system. School policies to address behavioral problems often include suspensions from school. This appears ineffective as a consequence for youth who don’t want to be there anyway. Academically this puts the youth, struggling to keep up, even further behind, and further alienating them from the sense of belonging that contribute to and their academic success.

With youth involved in the court system we attempt to address these issues with limited resources, often resulting in taking the youth back to court and imposing time in detention.

In an effort to keep youth in school and reduce court involvement, DYS developed the Suspension Alternative Program (SAP). When court- involved youth are suspended from school they can be referred to the program instead of staying home unsupervised or going to

formal court. This provides both accountability and consequences to the youth. The program provides services such as life skills groups, community service, tutoring, and credit recovery/PLATO. The life skills groups would attempt to educate/improve the skills youth have to prevent further suspensions. The tutoring and credit recovery programs would help youth earn credits or work on areas that need improvement, reducing frustration levels and increasing proficiency. The community service work gets the youth active while servicing the community. Youth that complete the program will not be charged and taken to court, reducing court involvement and detention time.

The Suspension Matrix Report 2002-2007, compiled for the Fayette County Public Schools Equity Council, reviewed suspension trends for the school years from August 2002 thru May 2007. Data in this report indicate that “African American and Hispanic students continue to be suspended from FCPS middle and high schools at disproportionately high rates.” Statistics also indicate that there is a higher number of African American youth on probation in Fayette County. The SAP can help reduce detention time of these youth by offering another level of care before incarceration.

- **2007** - MASH revised its eligibility criteria to accept youth charged with Assault IV on a case-by-case basis. Since these changes were implemented, MASH has seen a significant increase in referrals from Court Designated Workers and/or local law enforcement for status offenses as well as assault charges. In the nine months from November 2007 through August 2008, seventy-eight youth referred by the CDW office or police were served at MASH emergency shelter for a total of 801 days. Only nine of these youth either ran from MASH or were placed in detention due to violations of court orders. There were no violent incidents as a result of these youth being placed in an unsecured facility.
- **2008** - Kentucky Department of Protection and Advocacy no longer funds Legal Aid to provide legal representation for status offenders.
- **2008** - AOC has established a committee to implement the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Model Courts standards for Fayette Family Court. The Model Courts Project was established ten years ago, as a laboratory of change for court improvement. It's establishment was funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and Contracts with Courts Improvement Project. The project has been implemented in 28 courts in 24 jurisdictions nationwide. The current national goal of the Model Courts Project is “Courts Catalyzing Change: Reduce Disproportionality and Disparities for minority children and families.” The local committee is comprised of court personnel, social services and community agencies, and stakeholders.

Task I: Examination of Policy, Laws and Practices:

Spring 2004:

Internal assessments were conducted to facilitate a better understanding of independent operations at each decision point for negative and positive impacts on DMC, as well as for potential for bias. Presentations were given by the Law Enforcement, Court Designated Workers, District Court Judges, and state and city Probation offices, as well as the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department of Community Based Services.

January – October 2005:

Partners For Youth in collaboration with the Westend Community Empowerment Center (WECEP) implemented the Community Alternatives and Resources for Youth (CARY) program: CARY targeted youth between the age of 11 and 17, who have been formally charged with status and/or public offenses. It received referrals from the Division of Youth Services, Fayette County Detention Alternative Coordinator's office, Department of Juvenile Justice probation office, and the Department of Community Based Services.

February - March 2005:

Dr. Kimberly Kemp-Leonard, Professor of Sociology, Crime and Justice Studies, and Political Economy School of Social Sciences, University of Texas at Dallas provided Technical Assistance. In March Dr. Kemp-Leonard issued her report entitled, Technical Assistance Report on the DMC situation in Lexington, Kentucky, March 8, 2005.

January – April 2006:

The W. Haywood Burns Institute (BI) provided technical assistance to the DMC Committee, including a review of the local juvenile justice system in February 2007. The Burns Institute issued their report entitled, Haywood Burns Institute report on DMC in Fayette County, April 2nd, 2007 in May 2007.

Technical Assistance

Dr. Kimberly Kemp-Leonard February – March 2005

The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention contracted with Dr. Kemp-Leonard to provide Technical Assistant to Fayette County to do the following:

- Review current detention laws and policies;
- Review decision making practices of law enforcement and juvenile justice personnel;
- Interview/engage key community stakeholders in a discussion about DMC;
- Examine current detention criteria instruments;
- Examine training and self-assessment instruments; and
- Recommend policy changes, best practices and training.

Her report noted that:

- There aren't enough alternatives to detention for juvenile meeting criteria for detention; and
- There are no options available to judges for youth whose charges make them ineligible for detention.

Recommendations by Dr. Kemp-Leonard

- Develop a range of alternative statuses to which youth can be assigned, such as in-home restrictions and expanded informal supervision via the existing diversion program, new prevention programs, and the community initiatives run by the police department to include activities that keep arrested youth engaged with the community with minimal supervision;
- Develop and consistently use a standardized criteria instrument to assess youth's risk and needs. Adopting, even on a trial basis, a policy instrument with risk and needs assessment at formal detention hearings;
- Key stakeholders work to communicate with their counterparts in other agencies so that an effective system of juvenile justice can develop;
- Develop a system-wide information system so that patterns of case processing, although not necessarily individual youths, can be tracked; and
- Collect appropriate data, and generate quarterly or annual reports to establish if decisions made by representatives of the juvenile justice system are achieving the goals of "public safety and betterment of youth", while addressing race equity in the juvenile justice system.

Suggestions by Dr. Kemp-Leonard

- The committee give thoughtful consideration to the opportunities for the use of discretion by those defining offending behaviors that gets classified as disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, or attempting to flee/evade police, terroristic threats, criminal mischief, and receiving stolen property; and
- The DMC Committee analyze a large number of cases for which a lot of criteria are known and can be controlled statistically to observe patterns by race among cases that are otherwise similarly situated.

Dr. Kemp-Leonard also states that the long-standing racial stereotypes that depict African Americans, especially adolescent males, as threatening might be a potential contributor to bias.

Technical Assistance

W. Haywood Burns Institute

Initial conversation with the W. Haywood Burns Institute (BI) indicated that Fayette County would be provided with technical assistance for full implementation of the Burns Institute model, which is a collaborative, consensus based, and data driven process to reduce racial disparities in secure detention. The model included the following: data collection and analysis, analysis of data related offenses correlated against the number of youth placed in secure detention, analysis of community based alternatives to secure detention, the development of a timeline and strategy

to map the two target neighborhoods, recommendations for reducing risk factors, and assistance in creating a youth program directory. BI was to also provide additional technical assistance as needed and /or make technical assistance from juvenile justice experts available to the Partners for Youth Board to support activities such as additional data analysis, Risk Assessment Instrument development, and developing detention alternatives.

The **Scope of Work** (direct services provided to the local DMC Committee) from the W. Haywood Burns Institute included two days of examination of current activities, data collection, and committee development readiness. The goal of the two day pre-meeting was to develop the governing infrastructure necessary to actively engage in an intentional long-term process to reduce racial disparities in Fayette County's juvenile justice system.

Their examination of local systems and data collected included looking at pre-post detention data, crimes listed as the reason for detention, and sources of juvenile referrals to court designated worker's office for calendar years 2004-2006. Based on data analyzed by HBI, their report concluded:

- In 2006, African Americans represented 20% of young people age 10-17. However, these young people represented 57% of young people in detention, approximately three times their rate in population;
- The number of referrals to the court for African American youth (385) was about 1.5 times the number of referrals for Caucasian youth (222). These referrals are predominantly the result of calls/reports made to police from citizens or schools;
- School Security referrals for African American youth (45) are about double the referrals for Caucasian youth (23) (see graph below); and
- The charge used by school law enforcement and resulting in detention that seemed to have the most potential for bias was Disorderly Conduct. Twenty-one percent (21%) of high-school students detained (1 Caucasian, 13 African Americans) were charged with Disorderly Conduct.

HBI suggested:

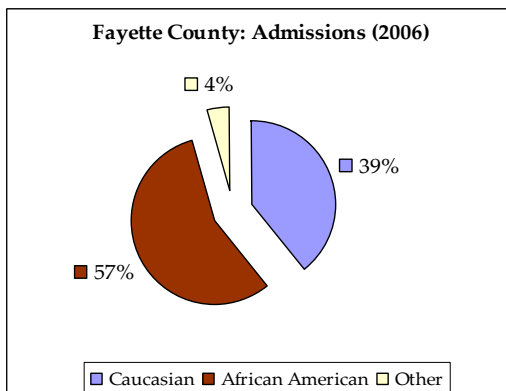
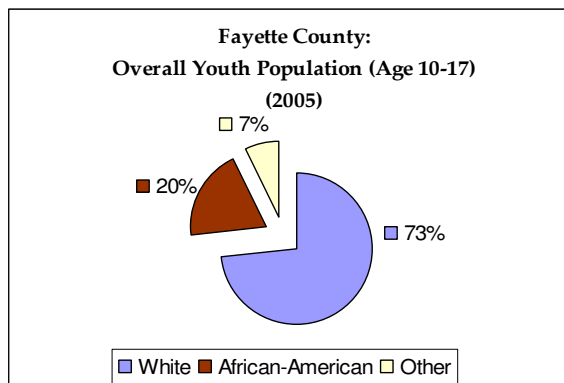
- The DMC Committee investigate how the disorderly conduct charge is defined and enforced by school resource officers, what accounts for the high proportion of African American youth being charged, and any viable intervention strategies which may be employed at the school to prevent or reduce the number of disorderly conduct charges.

HBI recommended for Fayette County:

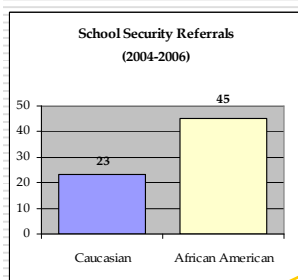
- Develop its unique Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI);
- Collect and consistently analyze data to develop policies and practices that will, if necessary, reduce racial disparities;
- Evaluate gaps in Fayette County's current data system, and the quality of the available data to assess the capacity to effectively identify and address DMC; and
- Data be analyzed and used to frame the DMC issue, identify the particular contributing factors, and create strategies to change practices and reduce DMC.

Haywood Burns Institute June 2007 Presentation

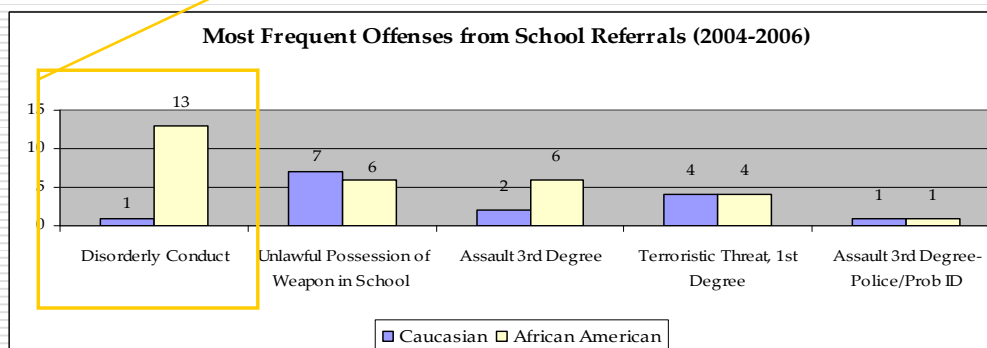
Fayette County DMC



Most Frequent Offense from School Referrals (2004-2006)



Referrals for "Disorderly Conduct" make up 21% of referrals from School Security. Almost all referrals to detention for "Disorderly Conduct" are for African American Youth



The School Data Sub-committee Report

Technical assistance by the W. Haywood Burns Institute identified the levying of disorderly conduct charges on high school students in Fayette County Public Schools as a discretionary act having potential for bias. The School Data Sub-Committee examined aggregated high school incident data leading to juvenile arrest; school administrative policies; and FCPS, Department of Law, Law Enforcement officers' policies, practices, assignments, and responsibilities. The following comprise their report to the DMC Committee:

All officers with the Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS), Department of Law are certified through the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training. This gives officers the same arrest powers as any other law enforcement officer in the state. Officers also attend 40 hours of annual training required of all law enforcement officers in Kentucky. At the time of the committee's work, there were 28 sworn law enforcement officers with the Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS), Department of Law Enforcement. Two officers were assigned at each high school, one of which was a full time officer. There are currently 27 sworn law enforcement officers. Multiple officers are assigned to one of five geographical areas. When fully staffed, this breaks down to four officers in each high school, officers working in middle schools (assigned to two schools and sharing equal time between the two schools), and coverage at the district's alternative school. Their jurisdiction is on school owned or leased properties.

All officers with the FCPS, Department of Law are certified through the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training. This gives officers the same arrest powers as any other law enforcement officer in the state. Officers also attend 40 hours of annual training required of all law enforcement officers in Kentucky. These officers work in collaboration with school leaders to ensure a safe environment for students, staff, parents and visitors while on school property. They work during school hours, but also cover extra-curricular events, such as dances, and sporting events.

Calls/reports leading to a juvenile coming in contact with FCPS law enforcement officers come from parents, central office, administrators, and Lexington Fayette Urban County Government Division of Police officers. In addition, information is often passed on to officers by students, which leads to a contact or observation of another student. Finally, officers observing risky behavior often approach youth to suggest behavior changes to prevent criminal behavior.

Once contact with a juvenile is initiated, the contact may be as brief as 2-3 minutes. However, contact leading to a custody hold takes, on average, approximately 1-2 hours. The length of time is determined by the nature of and complexity of the investigation the officer is working on. Officers deal with juveniles from all backgrounds. The frequency of contacts allows the officer to understand the juveniles with whom they are working.

If the officer knows that the juvenile has been identified as special education, this knowledge may play a role in the officer's decision on how to dispose of the case. Nonetheless, it is not an absolute certainty that a child identified as special education will not be charged. A child that receives special education services may and could face criminal charges depending upon the age of the child, the nature of the disability and the child's ability to form criminal intent. A

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behavior disorder does not exempt a child from the law. However, the officer works very closely with the administration, teachers, special education teachers and facilitators, and social workers to address the needs of the all students.

Before a child is taken into custody, the officer will need to verify if the child has an active custody order by contacting the CDW's office. Once the child is taken into custody, the officer will make a determination to either field release the child or to bring the child to meet with the CDW at the Fayette District Court secure area. The officer may field release if the child **does not** meet any of the criteria on the Pre-Adjudicative Detention form and/or the General Order 2005-1.

If a child **meets** any of the following criteria, he/she is eligible for detention and the judge must be contacted by the CDW as soon as possible to authorize either detention or release. If a child **does not** meet any of the following criteria, he/she may be released without further authorization from the Judge.

Authorized representatives of the Division of Youth Service Probation office cross-referenced FCPS law enforcement records of complaints with detention data and reported that the following is true for juveniles granted an extension of detention after having charges of disorderly conduct during the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 school-years:

- ❖ Most of the complaints were handled administratively at each school, and no custody holds were issued;
- ❖ Twelve (12) juveniles (five in 04-05 and seven in 05-06) were detained in the two year period examined. However, disorderly conduct was not the only reason for detention in any of these cases; and
- ❖ The juveniles who were detained for having Disorderly Conduct charges were, in fact, detained because of being on probation or had other charges at the time of arrest. The gender breakdown of juveniles detained was 10 males and 2 females. The racial make-up was 75% black, 12.5% white, and 12.5% bi-racial. In 2004-2005, five juvenile were detained (4 black males, and one bi-racial female.) In 2005-2006 school year, seven young people were detained (4 black males, 1 black female, and 2 white males.)

A significant number of these charges were filed at Martin Luther King Academy, as would be expected because MLK Academy is Lexington's alternative school for youth who are experiencing behavior challenges in their regular school settings.

The School Data sub-committee concluded that Disorderly Conduct charges filed by Fayette County Public School Law Enforcement officers were in accordance with the KRS definition of the charge. It also concluded that due to the low number of referrals from Fayette County Public Schools for Disorderly Conduct, this charge did not significantly contribute to DMC in Fayette County.

It agreed that a successful collaboration with juvenile justice system partners has proven beneficial in preventing complaints from resulting in charges. Probation Officers make regular school checks to monitor attendance, grades, and behavior as a preventative measure to catch problems early before they escalate. They review school records, help identify learning and

behavioral needs, refer to alternative education/vocational programs, and act as liaison between the Courts, youth, family, and school. They work as a team with the youth, school, community and family to address the needs of the youth. They help mediate disputes with the school, reducing the need for suspensions or charges when appropriate. They have sat in classes with the youth experiencing behavioral problems, and given lectures to classes. They give immediate consequences for school problems and work to develop alternatives to detention for school related problems. When it is determined or known that a juvenile has a Juvenile Probation Officer, school law enforcement office attempt to contact the Probation Officers to counsel with the juvenile, often leading to a de-escalation of the situation.

Task II: Advocate for System, Community, and Institutional Change

Spring 2005 - Present

Addressing local DMC-related issues and efforts of the DMC Committee became a regular agenda item during Fayette County District Judge's monthly meeting. These conversations resulted in changes to the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Fayette District Court, General Order 2000-4 used to determine if a juvenile must be presented to a judge for authorization to release or detain. It was amended in 2005 to clarify the category "Officer request detention" by deleting any reference to the types of offenses which might give rise to an officer requesting detention. It was agreed by the Judges that this would decrease the risk of a perception on the part of the officer that they were encouraged to request detention in cases in which detention would not otherwise be available.



Spring 2007

The DMC Committee agreed to partner with the Kentucky Department of Community Based Services led Race Community and Child Welfare Initiative to reduce the racial disparity and disparate treatment of minority in education, child welfare, and detention. This initiative seeks to affect change by addressing the bias screen by which minorities, especially African Americans are viewed. The process includes facilitating the People's Institute, Undoing Racism trainings, and hosting ongoing community conversations about racial issues in our community.

Fall 2007

Family Court Judges (Fayette Circuit Court) agreed to no longer pre-authorize detention on any runaway cases. When a child is picked up on a custody order for a runaway charge the case will be presented to the Judge who issued the custody order who would then make the decision to either detain or release to MASH, parents, etc.

November 2007

To be consistent with the Administrative Office of the Courts policy, District Court Judges elect in writing on Form AOC 34 whether to pre-authorize an extension of detention when they issue a pick-up order.

March 2008

To be consistent with the Administrative Office of the Courts policy, Family Court Judges elect in writing on Form AOC 35 whether to pre-authorize an extension of detention when they issue a pick-up order.

Spring 2008 - Present

Both District and Circuit Court Judges are partnering with the DMC Committee to identify existing alternatives to detention.

Summer 2008

The Risk Assessment Instrument Sub-committee designed a Risk Assessment Inventory (FAY-034-47) to serve as a case specific information gathering tool about youth who meet the criteria for detention based on the AOC –JW-39. This information would be used to inform the decision to detain. This information will tell us who is being detained and why. A Memorandum of Understanding was drafted and signed by all the parties affected: Patrick Yewell, Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort; Karma Potter Wilson for the local the CDW office; Megan Thornton, Chief District Judge; Jo Ann Wise, Chief Family Court Judge; and Officer Chris Townsend, Chair of the DMC Committee. They approved a four month testing of the use of the instrument. It was agreed that ongoing use of the inventory would be determined based on the benefits to the local DMC effort.

Risk Assessment Inventory Sub-Committee

The local DMC Committee established an ad-hoc committee to develop an instrument to be used alongside the required AOC JW-39 Pre-Adjudication Detention criteria instrument, which CDWs use statewide, and District Court Judges General Order Criteria Instrument. The RAI would compliment these instruments using clear questions and statements that increase objectivity to assure that only young people that should be detained will be detained.

The group reviewed Jefferson County Juvenile Court’s Risk Assessment Instrument draft, and Oregon’s Multnomah County Department of Community Justice RAI. The benefits of various elements of these instruments were discussed as potential complements to currently required criteria instruments. Factors in these discussions were: the purpose of detention, and to assess what services should be in place to prevent re-offending.

Purposes discussed included:

- Risk to community or public safety (example; Oregon JCP Screen/Assessment R4.8 - Behavior to hurt others or put them in danger (carried weapon, stole motor vehicle, attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting him/her, driving under the influence of drugs/alcohol));
- Risk of harm to Self (example; Oregon JCP Screen/Assessment R4.10 –Behavior hurts youth or puts her/him in danger (includes attempted suicide, riding in a vehicle with a teenage driver who had been drinking or using drugs, taking other excessive risks)). Also, should this category include whether a child need protection because he/she is a witness to a crime and is in danger of victimization;
- No parent, relative, or guardian to release the juvenile to (AOC JW-39 category Other: No. 3);
- Flight risk / Failure to appear for scheduled court hearing;
- Severity of crime; and
- Prior Record.

In the very early discussions, the RAI team agreed that a Violation of Probation charge should not automatically constitute a reason for detention. However, the committee considered Risk to Community (public safety) and potential flight risk (failure to appear for hearing) as serious

considerations for meeting criteria for detention. It felt that “Risk of Harm to Self” is very subjective, and much discussion centered around whether it would be a serious consideration for meeting criteria for detention.

Further discussions addressed:

- Parents requesting detention because they feel a need for respite;
- Allowing other family members or friends to take the child;
- Request by prosecutors for pickup orders;
- A child’s risk of re-offending before adjudication; and
- A child’s history of drug use or current drug use.

Data Sub-Committee

January 2004 through December 2006 detention data received from the Administrative Office of the Court (AOC) and analyzed by the W. Haywood Burns Institute reveals that Fayette County experienced a rather significant decrease in detention admissions of youth of color over a three year period. While examining the data, concerns were raised as whether Courtnet, AOC’s database, reflected juveniles in secure detention facilities after being adjudicated in Fayette County. Therefore a Data Sub-Committee was established to determine the best source of data to examine on a quarterly basis, and the particular data needed to establish benchmarks and progress of local DMC efforts. This data would also need to drive system policy change to assure that youth are being appropriately detained through the juvenile justice system process and offered needed treatment to prevent re-offending.

A deeper look at AOC detention data by stakeholders on this sub-committee quickly revealed discrepancies based on data pertinent to each stakeholder’s responsibility and stored in their data bank. Detention numbers from the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice reflected detention at the point of intake in their facility, including juveniles who do not go through the CDW’s office. AOC data reflected detention at the point of the granting of an extension of detention. As a result of these discrepancies, the Data Sub-committee decided that collecting and monitoring DJJ data captured the racial composition of juvenile in secure detention facilities. As suggested by technical providers, this sub-committee requested and received the following juvenile detention data from DJJ disaggregated by status and public offense for calendar years 2006 and 2007. Demographic information requested on each juvenile included: AID-ID # (to facilitate the number of times a youth entered detention and to determine various charges related to each detention), race, gender, age, detention charges and underlying charge, pre-post adjudication data, and date a juvenile entered and exited the detention facility.

The Data Sub-committee also decided that understanding DMC included: comparing across race groups the length of sentence for juvenile with similar convictions; the percentage of youthful offenders, serious/violent offenders (who are not youthful offenders); and the racial make-up of juveniles in detention and alternative to detention programs. This sub-committee also determined that driving system policy change might include understanding if and how the disparate representation of youth of color in adoptive and foster care, and disparity in suspension

rate for public schools, both of which mirror the disparate representation of youth of color in detention, potentially impacts DMC

This team has assembled stakeholders to review individual case files to track the path followed by several juveniles who have served significant time in detention. The review will track the child's record from early delinquent behavior to current charges in order to determine gaps in services, communication network, and missed opportunities for effective prevention and intervention. It will also assess the multi-systemic events or interventions that may have occurred with the case.

This examination is expected to:

- advise early intervention efforts;
- fuel recommendations for policy and procedure changes at each decision point having the potential to prevent re-offending and the escalation of offenses that lead to the committing of serious offenses;
- help identify best practice areas that each agency involved can build upon to decrease the disparate representation of juveniles of color in detention; and
- inform the decision on data to be collected from each agency on a regular basis.

Agencies participating in this process are the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Community Based Services, the Division of Youth Services, Fayette County Public Schools and the Court Designated Worker Program.

Alternatives To Detention Sub-Committee

An Alternatives to Detention (ATD) Sub-committee of the DMC committee was established to explore increased use of non-secure, intensive supervision opportunity, including in and out of county shelter option, and increased use of monitoring devices. The sub-committee is currently working with MASH Inc., the local DAC office, and Kentucky SEJAY to identify funding opportunities to open MASH's second building on Price Avenue.

This group is also working to identify barriers, challenges, and opportunities for addressing the need for emergency mental health and treatment options that would eliminate "Risk for Harm to Self" as a consideration for detention. Groups interviewed included The Ridge, Good Samaritan Hospital, and the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice Detention Alternative Coordinator to discuss mental health needs, options, and accessibility issues for law enforcement, and the courts.

Task III: Increase Positive Youth Development Opportunities (Partners for Youth Supported Programs)

As important as addressing the need for system and institutional change, a successful prevention effort requires addressing community risk factors. These could include the physical environment, health and safety concerns, adequate non-school hour activities/programs, and youth/adult relationships. It is also important to provide opportunities for young people to invest in their communities through volunteerism. Partners for Youth accepted the responsibility for implementing best practices and model programs with potential to impact DMC.

Partners for Youth also served as the Department of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Council for Fayette County since 2000. The focus of the Council's efforts are based on a local Needs Assessment and their goals to address out of school suspension, truancy, and aggressive behaviors by students attending targeted elementary and middle schools. The PFY Board coordinates the DJJ funded Community Juvenile Justice Partnership Grants (CJJPG) to local delinquency prevention programs. Through the CJJPG grants, more than \$1.8 million has been allocated to 21 local organizations. Each of these efforts, designed to support positive youth development and prevent juvenile delinquency, has been documented in annual reports to the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice.

In fiscal year 2006-07, the four CJJPG funded programs served 126 youth and 116 families. The youth's ages ranged from five to seventeen years of age and were in grades pre-school to the eighth grade. Of those youth, 73 (58%) were African American, 46 (37%) were Caucasian, 4 (3%) were Hispanic, 2 Bi-racial and one Asian. Eighty-six (68%) were males and 40 (32%) were females. These programs served the approximately the same percentages in 2007-2008.

Community Alternatives and Resources for Youth Program (CARY)

Funded by Kentucky SEJAY in 2004, Partners For Youth in conjunction with West End Community Empowerment Program (WECEP) implemented the Community Alternatives and Resources for Youth (CARY) program. CARY targeted youth from DMC targeted neighborhoods, between the age of 11 and 17, who have been formally charged with status and public offenses. Referrals came from the Fayette County Detention Alternative Coordinator's office, Department of Juvenile Justice probation office, and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. The CARY program received its first referral in January 2005. During the first six months of operation, the program received 23 referrals and served 18 youth.

The program provided up to six months of supervised activities and counseling for minority youth who had contact with the juvenile justice system and would otherwise have been detained in a secure detention facility. CARY's case management services included home visits, referrals for outside agency services, school visits, and numerous phone contacts. CARY program personnel documented 4,115.64 contact hours conducting case management and programming activities over a nine month period. During the school year, youth attending CARY participated

in sessions from 4-9pm, Monday through Friday, and engaged in weekend activities. During the summer CARY offered a full day of services from Monday to Friday, along with weekend activities. The program also provided transportation and meals for program participants.

The average recidivism rate for juveniles in detention is 35%. This percentage increases significantly for juveniles with a history of two or more contacts with the juvenile justice system. CARY's goal was to reduce the recidivism rate for participants during the engagement period for youth participating in the program. It was successful in that only 16.6% of youth participating in CARY re-offended during the time of their participation. Sixty percent of the program participants completed the program. This falls short of the 80% goal, but can not be considered a program failure, in that only two youth dropped out: one to go to work and one to prepare for college. As Dr. Melanie Otis (Ph D, University of Kentucky), who was the program evaluator, records; "Neither of these reasons for exiting the program is deemed problematic, assuming the youth continue with their plans and have no further contact with juvenile justice system." Youth completing the program spent an average 174 days in the program.

CARY activities included participation in WECEP's creative and performing arts classes, and sessions teaching cultural principles based on Sankofa culturally specific curricula. "The program utilized history and African-American culture to teach youth about social responsibility, commitment, and the importance of becoming engaged community members. Through participation in these activities, youth learned about their own place in history, and came to understand how their behavior impacts their own lives, and the lives of other community members."

Youth also received assistance with homework, tutoring, and learned to use educational computer programs designed to enhance their learning experience and academic success. While in the program, staff worked with the school system to monitor attendance, behavior, and academic achievement.

Youth participated in a host of structured recreational and community service activities, and went on field trips. In total, CARY completed 324 hours of volunteer work and an additional 108 hours of community service work. These activities included preparing nutritional baskets for 25 senior citizens, participation in a recycling campaign, and painting and gardening at an area school. CARY partners included the University of Kentucky 4-H program, YMCA of the Bluegrass, Fayette County Public Schools, Tubby Smith Foundation, Transylvania University, Asbury College, and God's Pantry.

Lastly, CARY participants attended Life Challenge Groups (LCG). LCG recognized that many problems youth encounter are the result of having insufficient tools and skills to negotiate conflict-ridden and stressful situations. The LCG included life skills programming. Components of the program focused on learning effective ways to manage anger and address conflict. Additionally, CARY participants' parents were engaged in various aspects of life skills training."

The CARY program stopped accepting referrals in the summer of 2005, after being notified by Kentucky SEJAY that it would not fund CARY after September 30th. Beginning October 1,

2005 SEJAY used continuation funds to provide technical assistance to three Kentucky counties, including Fayette, having the highest percentage of overrepresentation of minorities in detention.

LEXfusion Project

Partners For Youth established and implemented the LEXfusion Project to empower all sectors of the community to increase positive youth development opportunities in Lexington. Through this project, PFY works to increase cross-program collaboration, support increased program capacity, promote positive self-expression activities, and promote the reporting and celebrating of individual and program accomplishments. The long-term goal of Partners For Youth's youth development project is the establishment of a Lexington Youth Commission. Models studied included the Harlem Children's Zone (<http://www.hcz.org/project/mission.html>), City of Hampton, Coalition for Youth (<http://www.hampton.gov/foryouth/>), Portland Youth Alliance, and America's Promise Communities that Care.

A key component of the LEXfusion project is the establishment of Neighborhood Youth Councils (NYC). The purpose of these youth-led councils is to facilitate or advocate for changes in their smaller geographic communities to increase opportunities within walking distance for positive non-school hours programming, safety, availability of resources, and civic engagement activities for young people.

January 2004

Partners For Youth, as the lead agent in Fayette County's DMC initiative, applied for a three-year federal grant from the Kentucky Youth Development Partnership. The purpose of the grant was to increase city-wide opportunities for positive civic engagement activities, positive use of time, and positive self-expression through the arts.

Fall of 2004

Partners For Youth contracted with University of Kentucky 4-H to implement a local Positive Youth Development Demonstration Project. Members of the planning committee for the project included representatives from:

- MASH Inc. (local runaway and homeless shelter)
- Mayor's Youth Council
- Lexington Youth Leadership Academy, Kentucky Conference on Community and Justice
- Girl Scouts, Wilderness Road Council
- LexLinc of the Bluegrass
- Amachi Central Kentucky, Lexington Leadership Foundation
- Urban League
- YWCA, Phyllis Wheatley Center
- YMCA of Central Kentucky
- Southern Middle School, Youth Service Center
- AVOL (AIDS Volunteers of the Bluegrass)
- Kentucky YMCA, Youth Association
- Kentucky Center for School Safety

- Parents

Spring of 2005

Established two Neighborhood Youth Development Zones based on risk factors highlighted by DMC data.

Summer of 2005

Engaged youth in Community **Perception** Mapping in the two Neighborhood Youth Development Zones, using tools and a mapping process developed by the Academy for Educational Development (AED,) and the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. Young mappers walked through their neighborhoods and documented contributions and threats to a positive youth development experience from their own perspectives. Community partners for this mapping efforts included, Fayette County Division of Police, the Gainesway Empowerment Center, Crossing Christian Church, and LFUCG Division of Police; Walmart, Target, Altrusa International, Dicks Sporting Goods; and various restaurants, also made contribution of food, water, and meals for mappers including Applebees, Papa Johns Pizza, Chick Filet, Chipotle, Joe Bologna Pizza, and McDonalds.

Fall 2005

Engaged youth in a Community **Resource** Mapping in the two Neighborhood Youth Development Zones, using tools and process developed by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. Young people participating in the mapping project performed two days of mapping for each neighborhood. Resource mapping included identifying community resources that contributed to healthy communities, interviewing proprietors and program staff to determine opportunities for positive youth programming and activities during non-school hours, volunteerism, jobs, and training opportunities.

Spring 2006

Young people, including former community mappers, were recruited to become members of Neighborhood Youth Councils (NYC). Using the community mapping results, Councils identified and prioritized unique issues of concern to both advocate for and facilitate an increase in resources, safety, and positive activities and opportunities for children and youth. To date, youth participating on NYCs have reported an increase in the number of developmental assets in their lives. These include involvement in extra-curricular activities and better youth/adult relationships. It also includes an increase in academic scores, job readiness (employability skills), number of volunteer hours, and confidence. In addition, they report an increase in creativity, decision making and problem solving skills, life skills, and public speaking skills, all of which have lead to a decrease in delinquent behavior.

2006

Partners For Youth held its first annual Spotlight on Youth Celebration. This city-wide celebration of youth was held in downtown Lexington. This festival featured an Opportunity Fair, awards for youth, adults, and grassroots programs working to increase character-building opportunities for young people, and a talent show featuring visual as well as performing arts (drawing, poetry, instrumentals, songs, and dance).

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Fall 2006

Partners For Youth applied for and received Lexington's first designation as one of America's 100 Best Communities for Youth from the national America's Promise Organization. Partners also hosted its first celebration of agencies providing quality services and programs to youth in Lexington who contributed to the application.

April 2007

Neighborhood Youth Council members were trained by representatives of the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts in Project Citizen Training in Public Policy Making. Young people were also trained by the representatives from the University of Kentucky Department of Multi-cultural affairs in public speaking.

Spring 2007

Partners For Youth applied for and, in the fall, received Lexington's second designation as one of America's 100 Best Communities for Youth from the national America's Promise Organization.

June 2007

Partners For Youth's LEXfusion Project held its second annual Spotlight on Youth Celebration in downtown Lexington. At this celebration PFY surveyed youth about their experience with and perception of law enforcement and court.

Summer 2007

Neighborhood Youth Councils prioritized issues from community mapping results and decided to address safety and public bad behavior.

October - November 2007

Neighborhood Youth Councils held Community Awareness Campaigns, community forums, and a youth forum to garner community opinion on safety at program sites and public bad behavior, as well as input on strategies for addressing related concerns.

February 2008

Neighborhood Youth Councils presented a report of their community based efforts to the Lexington Fayette Urban County Council. Sponsor: Councilperson Kathy Crosby.

Spring 2008

Partners For Youth applied for a third year designation as one of America's 100 Best Communities for Youth. It became one of only 23 cities in the United State to receive this designation three times in row.

May 2008

LEXfusion partnered with MASH, the local runaway and homeless shelter, for NYC youth to receive the Wyman Teen Outreach Program Trainings (TOPS). Facilitated TOPS sessions help youth define both their sense of community, which was the environment in which they lived, and their roles and responsibility as a member of the broader society. Training components included:

- TOPS: Circles of Resources—“what is resource; how are you a resource, what are the resource you offer to your community, and how can you be a resource to your community;
- TOPS: Sexuality: What is sexuality, the risk of Sexual Relationships, Basic Contraception, and Sexual transmitted disease—the truth and myths;
- TOPS: Youth Identity: who you are and how it would feel to be that other person (sharing the feelings of others and their situation);
- TOPS: Values: introduction of values—what are values, what are your values, Advantage and disadvantages; and
- TOPS: Group Rules: what are rules, what are your rules, what are your family rules?

June 2008

Partners For Youth held its third annual Spotlight on Youth Celebration in downtown Lexington.

Truancy Assessment Center (TAC)

The need for truancy prevention programs became evident with information regarding youth incarcerated in the local detention center. In 2003, staff at the detention center reviewed files of all the youth housed at that time and discovered that, regardless of the charge for which they were being held, for 85% of these youth their first charge was truancy. This is consistent with the National Center for School Engagement data that also indicates delinquency and adult criminality can be a result of truancy. Adult inmates were surveyed as to the one thing they would change in their life that would have helped them stay out of prison and, overwhelmingly, they say staying in school. Other consequences for truancy include poverty and dependent on public assistance.

Partners For Youth also studies local juvenile justice issues in order to address the gaps in services for at risk and delinquent youth by collaborating with local youth service providers and juvenile justice personnel to implement policy change. In December 2006, PFY received a three year Title V grant to implement the Truancy Assessment Center. The TAC began service delivery in January 2007. The TAC has been successful in preventing 60% of the youth referred from accruing six more unexcused absences.

The TAC is based on the New York City’s Family Assessment Program (FAP) evaluated by the Vera Institute of Justice, Youth Justice Program (www.vera.org/publications). In 2001, the New York State legislature expanded the definition of status offenders in response to parents seeking governmental assistance for troubled youth. Prompted by this, a collaboration of the agencies affected by this increase examined the system and created the Family Assessment Program (FAP), an innovative approach to status offender intake, assessment and service delivery. The FAP provides a social worker who assesses the families’ concerns and immediate access to services.

As with the FAP, the Lexington Truancy Assessment Center (TAC) is the result of community collaborations examining the issue of truancy. Partners for Youth initiated the Truancy

Workgroup in 2003 and the Family Court began a Truancy Collaboration in 2004. These collaborations evidenced the need for a Truancy Assessment Center (TAC) that would provide the same functions as the FAP. In 2004, Kentucky also had a change in legislation that would increase the number of status offenders by revising the definition of habitual truancy from nine days to six days.

The Truancy Assessment Center provides Lexington with a resource for troubled families and youth who are experiencing problems with school attendance and/or success.

The TAC completes a multi-generational, comprehensive assessment for the family and offers a “one-stop-shop” approach for families needing services. The assessment identifies the family’s strengths, needs, and issues impacting the youth’s school attendance and refers the family to the most appropriate community partner to receive services. If family does not meet eligibility criteria for any of the community partners, TAC provides case management services until truancy has stopped or the family is transitioned to ongoing services.

The TAC is located on the same campus where the following services are offered and can be accessed by TAC clients easily: out-patient substance abuse treatment; social services; medical and educational services for teen parents; and a day treatment program for youth who have problems in regular school. Offices are provided to other community agencies so their services can be available at the same location.

One of the rationales for the TAC is the realization that youth come in to the juvenile justice system through different doors, but have very similar problems. For example, a youth referred to juvenile court for habitual truancy may also be exhibiting problems with depression. Or, a youth referred to the Early Intervention Program at Comprehensive Care Center may also be having problems at school or attending school.

While the trigger for referral to the TAC is truancy, the data and research indicates that if a youth is exhibiting problems with school, he/she will have problems at home or in other areas of their lives. The TAC provides a comprehensive picture of the youth and family, and offer services in one convenient location. TAC functions include:

- early identification, assessment and intervention;
- utilization of multi-agency cooperation;
- identification of family problems contributing to truancy or other problems identified by the assessment;
- providing or coordinating the provision of case management services;
- referring students and families to appropriate resources;
- decreasing truancy and referrals to court; and
- increasing parent and community involvement addressing the needs of youth in our community.

In January 2007, the Fayette Family Court changed the county’s response to habitual truancy by ordering that the Director of Pupil Personnel file a petition with the CDW office for youth who have 12 or more unexcused absences. In the 2006-2007 school year, FCPS filed 899 habitual truant petitions (approximately 400 more than Louisville, Ky.) This was an increase of over 55% from the previous school year. Therefore, the referrals the TAC would have received from the CDW office are now on the formal court docket. As the TAC provides crisis intervention and

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other services prior to disposition, referrals from the court have increased. This process has continued for school year 2007-08.

From January 2007 to June 2007, the Fayette Family Court processed 629 new cases and held 751 reviews of those cases. All of these youth are on court orders to attend school and will be reviewed by the court regularly. To accommodate the increase of court reviews, Judge Wise has created Truancy Review Teams comprised of her court staff, TAC staff and other community partners. TAC staff has increased the number of families they assist as participants of these teams. TAC staff participates in approximately 30-40 reviews as part of the Truancy Review Teams a month. While it is not realistic for TAC to complete a holistic assessment of all of these youth, TAC staff has facilitated referrals to community partners when youth and parents request services in these reviews.

Early data collected indicates that Fayette County's new response to habitually truancy is effective. The implementation of the TAC has evolved with the change in the Family Court Truancy Docket and has proven to be an effective model of service delivery for this community.

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.
